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The situation in the Middle East

Letter dated 9 November 2011 from the Permanent Representative of Lebanon to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

On instructions from my Government, I have the honour to transmit to you herewith the position of Lebanon, in preparation for the comprehensive assessment that you will present in your forthcoming report on the implementation of Security Council resolution 1701 (2006) (see annex).

I should be grateful if you would have the present letter and its annex issued as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda item 36, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Nawaf **Salam**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

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Annex to the letter dated 9 November 2011 from the Permanent Representative of Lebanon to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General*

Position of Lebanon in preparation for the comprehensive assessment that will be presented by the Secretary-General in his forthcoming report on the implementation of Security Council resolution 1701 (2006)

In preparation for the comprehensive periodic assessment that will be presented by the Secretary-General in his forthcoming report on the implementation of Security Council resolution 1701 (2006), Lebanon wishes to stress that from the day resolution 1701 (2006) was adopted, Israel has failed to honour its obligation to implement it or to withdraw from all occupied Lebanese territory, and has persisted in violating both the provisions of the resolution and Lebanese sovereignty, thereby ensuring that no progress has been made in the implementation of resolution 1701 (2006) with respect to obliging Israel to withdraw from all Lebanese territory and cease its infractions. Lebanon would like to draw attention to the following:

1. Lebanon reiterates its commitment to the full implementation of resolution 1701 (2006) and calls on the international community to bring pressure to bear on Israel to fulfil its obligation to implement that resolution in full.

2. Since the last assessment, the Israeli army has continued to violate Lebanese sovereignty and all provisions of resolution 1701 (2006). Those violations include the following:

(a) During the reporting period, the Israeli enemy army continued to violate the sovereignty of Lebanese territory, airspace and territorial waters, committing 495 air violations, 107 land violations and 204 sea violations, bringing the number of violations committed by Israel since the adoption of resolution 1701 (2006) to some 9,168. Those violations flagrantly flout Lebanese sovereignty and the provisions of resolution 1701 (2006), which calls for full respect for the Blue Line. Lebanon therefore calls upon the international community to bring pressure to bear on Israel and oblige it to cease its daily violations of Lebanese sovereignty and to respect the international resolutions adopted by the United Nations. Lebanon absolutely rejects any attempt to link those violations to claims of arms smuggling.

(b) Lebanon notes yet again that Israel threatens Lebanon on a daily basis, carrying out hostile activities across the Blue Line and installing the spying networks that were uncovered in recent months, which were working in Lebanese territory on behalf of Israel and constitute a flagrant violation of resolution 1701 (2006) that made it necessary to submit a complaint to the Security Council.

(c) Notwithstanding all the efforts that have been exerted by the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) in order to facilitate the complete withdrawal of Israel from the northern part of the village of Ghajar, with a view to achieving which aim the Lebanese Government is cooperating with UNIFIL, the Israeli army continues to occupy that area, thereby violating its obligation to withdraw unconditionally behind the Blue Line in accordance with resolution 1701 (2006).

* Also circulated in S/2011/711.

(d) The continued occupation by Israel of the Lebanese Kafr Shuba hills and Shab'a Farms constitutes a threat to stability and security all along the borders, as well as a violation of Security Council resolutions 425 (1978) and 1701 (2006). Lebanon demands that Israel should completely and unconditionally withdraw from those areas, and thereby fully resolve the issue. Lebanon urges the Secretary-General of the United Nations to intensify his diplomatic efforts to ensure that Israel withdraws from that Lebanese territory.

(e) Israel's delay in providing data on the positions of unexploded ordnance, including the cluster bombs that were dropped at random on civilian areas, has caused the death or injury of more than 400 persons, including more than 51 fatalities and 357 injured. Lebanon yet again underlines the fact that the Government of Lebanon has its doubts about the precision of the maps that it has received from Israel. The Lebanese Army has asked for aerial photographs or video pictures of the targeted areas before and after the bombardments and for information regarding the dates on which the cluster bombs that were used during the Israeli raids were dropped, together with the quantity and type of those bombs.

That crime against humanity comes on top of another, persisting crime, namely, the landmines that were laid in Lebanon by Israel, largely during its 22-year occupation of Lebanese territory. Lebanon urges the United Nations and donor countries to continue to address that issue, in order to protect the lives of innocent civilians, and calls for the Lebanon Mine Action Centre to be granted the necessary financial resources to enable it to carry out its mandate. In view of the numerous crimes that Israel has committed against Lebanon and its population, Israel should pay appropriate compensation.

(f) The Israeli army has continued to use launches to carry out illegal patrols inside Lebanese territorial waters, close to what is known as the "line of buoys" that Israel positioned unilaterally and illegally inside Lebanese territorial waters. Israel fraudulently claims that the aforesaid line approximates the southern borders of Lebanese territorial waters. Lebanon reiterates its refusal to recognize any line that has been imposed unilaterally and considers the Israeli measures to be further violations of Lebanese sovereignty and resolution 1701 (2006). Lebanon therefore further requests the United Nations to authorize UNIFIL to put in position in the region a line of buoys that is in keeping with international standards.

3. During the reporting period, in addition to the relevant documents that it had already deposited, Lebanon deposited with the United Nations the following:

- A map that delineates the southern maritime border with occupied Palestine of Lebanon's exclusive economic zone and sets forth the geographical coordinates of that border, that were drawn in accordance with international standards.

- Two maps relating to the south-western borders of Lebanon's exclusive economic zone, with tables that set forth the geographical coordinates of those borders.

Furthermore, two letters on this matter were addressed to the Secretary-General on 4 January 2011 and 17 February 2011, in which the Secretary-General was requested to call upon UNIFIL to undertake the delineation of a maritime security border, along the lines of the Blue Line on land, that conforms to the southern and south-western borders of Lebanese territorial waters and of Lebanon's

exclusive economic zone. That would be in keeping with the role played by UNIFIL in determining the land borders of Lebanon.

On 20 June 2011 and 3 September 2011, the Minister for Foreign Affairs and Emigrants addressed letters to the United Nations Secretary-General expressing, respectively, Lebanon's objection to the agreement signed by Cyprus and Israel, and to the coordinates which Israel deposited with the United Nations with regard to its exclusive economic zone.

4. The Lebanese Army is continuing to strengthen field and strategic cooperation with UNIFIL.

(a) The continuing coordination between the Lebanese Army and UNIFIL is particularly evident in their joint patrols, joint checkpoints and joint military training operations and exercises.

(b) Lebanon stresses the fact that none of the reports of the Secretary-General on the implementation of Security Council resolution 1701 (2006) has made any reference to indications that weapons are smuggled into the UNIFIL area of operations. All weapons that have been seized are remnants of the war waged against Lebanon by Israel in the summer of 2006. Lebanon further stresses once again that the Lebanese Army and the Lebanese security apparatus have not reported any incidence of weapon smuggling since the most recent report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of Security Council resolution 1701 (2006) was submitted to the Security Council.

(c) Israel's claim that weapons are being stockpiled and military installations established in densely populated civilian areas in South Lebanon bears no relation to the truth, and is designed to facilitate the targeting by Israel of innocent Lebanese civilians and justify their slaughter and terrorization, regardless of the fact that all international instruments and, in particular, those of international humanitarian law, outlaw and criminalize the targeting of civilians.

(d) Lebanon continues to participate in tripartite meetings that are held with a view to maintaining peace along the Blue Line. Those meetings are the appropriate place in which to address issues pending from resolution 1701 (2006) and flashpoints along the aforementioned Line. Israel's persistence in resorting to unilateral measures undermines those tripartite meetings and the role of UNIFIL in maintaining the peace in its area of operations. Furthermore, those unilateral measures are intended to raise doubt as to the capacity of the Lebanese armed forces to defend the sovereignty of all Lebanese territory, contrary to the spirit of resolution 1701 (2006).

(e) With respect to the positioning of markers along the Blue Line, Lebanon affirms yet again the agreement that was reached at the tripartite meeting with a view to making progress in and accelerating that operation. Israeli procrastination in that regard raises doubts as to its real intentions.

5. Lebanon stresses the importance of strengthening and raising the level of international assistance in building the capacities of the Lebanese Army and security forces and preparing them to perform their duty to defend Lebanese sovereignty and protect the Lebanese people. The Lebanese Army needs reinforcements of arms and ammunition and to acquire more modern means of surveillance and up-to-date

communications equipment. It also requires training in the use of all such equipment and apparatus.

6. At the economic level, we once more support the call that is made to the international community in resolution 1701 (2006) to extend more of the assistance that is necessary for the reconstruction and development of Lebanon. In that connection, we urge States that took part in the Stockholm Conference, Paris III and the Vienna Conference to honour their commitments. Lebanon greatly appreciates all economic and social programmes and humanitarian assistance that UNIFIL provides to the Lebanese people in its area of operations, including projects that have an immediate impact and emergency medical services.

7. If stability and security are to be enhanced, a move must be made from a situation of cessation of hostilities towards a situation of permanent ceasefire.